

# The JJ Smash

Urban Ed, Inc.  
515 8th Street, SE  
2nd Floor  
Washington, DC 20003  
Tel: 202-543-9462  
Fax: 202-543-9443  
info@urbaned.org  
www.urbaned.org

VOLUME 1, June 2003

## Lifting New Voices Coming to an END!

The Center for Community Change's (CCC) Lifting New Voices (LNV) project is coming to an end. Yes, it has been 5 years since it all began. The journey to help grassroots organizations from around the country more effectively integrate youth voice into overall community and organizational decision making is now coming to a close, but not an end. The project, funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the Ford Foundation has had many milestones and the time has come to capture the many lessons learned. More importantly, the time has come to build on its success.

CCC is now under the exciting new guidance of Deepak Bhargava who has reassessed and reorganized many special projects and departments. One of those special projects was LNV. Deepak has made a strategic decision to work in collaboration with Urban Ed, Inc., (UEI) leaving the

future of the project in the hands of one of its very own. Urban Ed was started about three years ago by Roxanne Williams who directed the LNV project for nearly two of its five years. It is a perfect transition for the future of the outstanding work that has been accomplished.

Urban Ed is a youth-focused organization committed to economic development and social justice for young people. UEI is putting in place an action plan for a national platform around juvenile justice and workforce development. Urban Ed is laying out an aggressive plan. More details are inside this issue.

Urban Ed will also develop several publications that will be solid collections to anyone's social justice and youth organizing library.

### **Inside This Issue:**

- *Urban Ed's Plan for a National Platform*
- *National Coalition on SO*
- *Request for Participation*
- *Youth Organizing Publication Available*

### **Coming in Our Next Issue:**

- *The JJ Act and the M-O-N-E-Y*
- *What's WIA Got on Employing the "Street" Youth*

*Young people are fundamentally the most important voice for social change*



# Rolling Out a National JJ Platform



*We need more accountability for justice systems around the country. Less jails and more schools. Less police in schools and more teachers. Less young people of color, profiled and disproportionately confined. More \$ for alternatives - PERIOD!*

*Picture to left from David Massey, images collected over several of years from visiting Graffiti Wall of Fame in DC*

## ENOUGH'S ENOUGH!

### So What is UEI looking at?

Young black males are being expelled at alarming rates and even arrested while merely trying to "go to school". Pregnant females are being kicked out of school. More and more young people are dropping out because they are not being academically challenged. Just as easy as you find a cafeteria lady serving lunch, you find a police officer armed in our schools. Community centers turn away the "thug life" labelled youth because they "don't want no trouble". At most crime scenes the description of the suspect is undoubtedly a young black male, with baggy jeans and a T-shirt.

Billions of dollars are spent nationwide to



prosecute, supervise, and treat youth accused or convicted of delinquent or criminal acts while way too little money is invested in community-based programs and resources.

In fact in 2002 \$76 million was provided to states in grants for "juvenile justice prevention work" (alternatives), compared to \$190 million in funds to state agencies for "accountability" - monies that allow for the construction of jails and largely support the system as opposed to alternatives. In fact, of that \$190 mil, states are required to pass through 75% to government agencies only. And to boot, the law simply "encourages" passing thru monies to CBOs (community-based organizations) as opposed to agencies.

## NOW ON A POSITIVE TIP..

In 1998 Congress passed a law to promote stronger linkages between workforce development and the juvenile justice system mandating that one-third of Workforce Investment Act funds go to out-of-school youth and employment be a viable alternative to lock up.

## WHATEVER, RIGHT?

**Bottomline** - youth continue to be inappropriately or unnecessarily detained, racial inequalities in the juvenile court system remain high and conditions of confinement for detained youth are the worst we've seen. Youth remain "broke" and never see the millions of employment dollars allocated for them.

## IT'S GOTTA STOP!

Urban Ed is an organization whose mission is all about wealth creation. Economic prosperity and justice is our focus and we are carrying out progressive sector employment strategies that target the out-of-school, unemployed young person. Youth that drop out, who are ex-offenders, truant or loiters are our business and we're driven to leveling the corporate playing field of opportunity! But Urban Ed is committed to not just scratching the surface. We are getting to the root causes of what puts a young

person of color in an out-of-school, unemployed status.

### YOU FEELING ME?

Then we want you to hop the train. We are in the process of putting in place a national platform that will shake up the links between the MONEY, JOBS and our YOUTH. If this is your passion, your interest, your concern, your issue then we invite you to join us in September 2003 for a special strategy meeting in Washington, DC. We have limited travel scholarships available and the meeting will piggy back on Listen, Inc.'s Annual Gathering with over 250 social justice attendees. You got power in your voice! Bring it to DC in September! For more info give us a call. Want to participate in the strategy meeting to kick it all off. Return the RFP Form by August 25, 2003.

### CREATING A COMMON BOND

For years there has been what one could call, a *little* animosity between those that provide a service and those that do organizing. But if you think about it, it's like people of color fighting each other to gain the edge on equality. Either way both races are still oppressed!

So, we're thinking, to build on a national gathering of service and organizing intermediaries and CBOs hosted in October of 2001 under the LNV project, Urban Ed is looking to start a little somethin' somethin'. More specifically, starting a National Coalition on Service and Organizing. The Coalition will work to do two things (1) equalize the distribution of money so that more social change work can be funded and (2)

build the power (shear numbers) of youth doing organizing.

### SO, WHY STOP A GOOD THANG!

The meeting back in Oct of '01 that brought service and organizing together in the same room was full of heat, but ended in what we believe was a solid stride forward on bridging something constructive between the two fields. Everyone left eager to explore more about bridging alliances that will ultimately have a huge impact on both fields and create less division. We invite you to learn more about our Coalition and let us know your interest in becoming a part of it. Call us, email us, snail mail us. Either way express yourself and most definitely join us in September '03 at Listen's Annual Gathering.



Graffiti Canvas by Jeff Soto  
*Money Doesn't Grow on Trek's Tree*

## Request For Participation

Holla! As youth of color, we need more representation than ever before. We need a strong and powerful voice. We need to understand how policies are made and the impact those policies have. We need to see the dynamics of power in action and gain the upper knowledge, energy and will to shift that dynamic.

Urban Ed calls to you to join us in establishing our National Platform on Juvenile Justice. On September 25 and 26, 2003, we will start the development of our strategy with 15 experienced youth organizers from around the country. On the real tip - if you have an interest in the justice system, the employment system and youth. If you have an interest in connecting to a national platform. If you are itching for something that will change the way the world views and deals with youth of color, then we invite you to apply to participate in our Platform Strategy Meeting.

The meeting will be held in Washington, DC and best believe it will be dynamic. We will learn even more about how policies around juvenile justice are made (how politicians are trading off bills), analyze the connections with WIA and its policies on employment as alternatives, get heated about how much money is being spent and how little accountability really exist and, most importantly, we will walk away with the start of a plan- a strategy for shaking the systems in the name of equality for youth of color.

If you're interested, fill out the RFP form enclosed and send it back to Urban Ed. A limited number of travel stipends will be provided based on need so get your RFP in **SOONER THAN LATER!**

# Youth Organizing Guidebook Available

Think about it! Youth from around the country have changed more public policy than we could ever imagine. They are running their own organizations, building power by the truck loads and keeping those decision-makers in check. Youth are keeping it real and after 5 years of the Lifting New Voices project, we just had to capture the essence of the outcomes. Thanks to the Center for Community Change, we are able to do just that and give you something useful to continue building the skills of youth to do social change.

This guidebook is designed as a tool for youth organizers, for those seeking to teach young people about social change, and for those wanting to learn more about the field of youth organizing. It is not a research

## **The Hell With Satus Quo!** *A Practical Guidebook on Youth Organizing*



document rather a workbook with tools, case studies and training modules to help add to your resource bank. One difference - this pub will not gather dust!

The publication can be ordered from our website or by calling us. To view the table of contents check us out on the web at [www.urbaned.org](http://www.urbaned.org) and go to publications.

Also coming, the lessons of LNV. Youth organizing is not easy work. You don't just show up and create change. It is not a smooth sail everyday. And with every campaign - you win some and you lose some. Later this year Urban Ed will rollout another resource for you that captures the real ups and downs of this field of work. Check it!

## Mailing Label



Urban Ed, Inc.  
515 8th Street, SE  
2nd Floor  
Washington, DC 20003  
Tel: 202-543-9462  
Fax: 202-543-9443  
[info@urbaned.org](mailto:info@urbaned.org)  
[www.urbaned.org](http://www.urbaned.org)